

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

2321 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6301  
(202) 225-6371  
[www.science.house.gov](http://www.science.house.gov)

September 9, 2011

Hon. Ralph M. Hall  
Chairman  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology  
2321 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hall:

I know that you share my interest in creating good jobs, strengthening our economy, maintaining our scientific and technological leadership, and ensuring our long-term competitiveness in the international marketplace. After the President's speech last night to Members of Congress, I am more convinced than ever that it is important that our Committee do what it can to shine a light on the critical role that R&D and STEM initiatives play in fostering job creation and the emergence of new industries.

The President focused his remarks last night primarily on near-term job creation, and I support him in that effort and applaud his sense of urgency—I share his view that this is an urgent national need. While our Committee doesn't appear to have jurisdiction over the specific proposals outlined in his speech, I would urge you to consider focusing the Committee's oversight and legislative agenda for the remainder of this Congress on those areas of our jurisdiction that spur innovation and create the skilled jobs and new companies that will contribute to economic growth—an essential requirement for long-term deficit reduction.

There are a number of specific actions that I would request that the Committee undertake in the coming weeks and months. These include scheduling hearings on advanced manufacturing technologies and moving legislation to reauthorize the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Consortia program, as proposed in the FY 2012 budget request so that we can grow the nation's manufacturing sector. I also would request that you consider holding hearings and developing legislation to strengthen technology transfer and commercialization of federally funded research and development, so that we can help ensure that federal investments in research and development result in new products, new businesses, and new jobs.

The Committee can also contribute to economic growth by scheduling immediate Committee consideration of the bipartisan *Fire Grants Reauthorization Act of 2011* (H.R. 2269) so fire departments throughout the country can hire new firefighters. In addition, I would strongly encourage you to work with Chairman Graves and House leadership to schedule immediate floor consideration of the *Creating Jobs Through Small Business Innovation Act of 2011* (H.R. 1425) to reauthorize the Small Business Innovative Research program.

I would also urge you to move the reauthorizations of the National Nanotechnology Initiative (NNI) and the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) program. I am pleased that you have already held a hearing on the NNI and have scheduled a hearing on the NITRD program. A critical component of both of these programs is strong public/private partnerships in which U.S. industry benefits from both the research breakthroughs supported by the federal science agencies and the hiring of young scientists and engineers trained under federal research grants. Both of these elements – the research advances and the hiring of our best young minds – allow industries in these economically important sectors to continue to innovate, expand, and create American jobs at all levels.

Finally, I would note that agencies such as NASA and DOE have been major sources of innovation in the past, and I would urge the Committee to devote attention this Congress to examining ways that that record of accomplishment can be continued. My staff will be happy to work with your staff to explore oversight and legislative options in all of the areas I have mentioned.

Job creation is the urgent task confronting this Congress. I look forward to working with you to carry out a constructive Committee agenda to address this critical need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Eddie Bernice Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eddie" being particularly prominent.

EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

Ranking Member

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology